

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 39

By Coleman

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Specialist Raymond Neal Mitchell III, United States Army.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans continue this time-honored tradition of volunteerism through service in the Armed Forces, including the United States Army; sadly, many of these honored defenders of our nation and its liberties have fallen in battle throughout our country's history; and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 2007, Specialist Raymond Neal Mitchell III, United States Army, died from wounds he sustained during routine security operations while on patrol in Baghdad, Iraq; and

WHEREAS, Specialist Mitchell was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart in recognition of his dedicated and courageous service while making the ultimate sacrifice; and

WHEREAS, Specialist Mitchell's other decorations include a National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Combat Infantryman's Badge; and

WHEREAS, a beloved son, brother, and grandson, Raymond Neal Mitchell III was born in Smyrna, graduated from West Memphis Christian School in 2004, and attended Arkansas State University before joining the Army; and

WHEREAS, those who best knew Raymond Neal Mitchell III describe him as having the attributes that make a fine soldier: he was fearless and competitive, yet friendly and unselfish; and

WHEREAS, Specialist Mitchell was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, New York; and had just left again for Baghdad on Dec. 6, 2006, after a two-week furlough for Thanksgiving; and

WHEREAS, he was a proud member of the Golden Dragons, Charlie Company, which was deployed in August 2006; and

WHEREAS, Specialist Mitchell served with great courage and gallantry, giving his life for his country and for the cause in which he believed, and for that ultimate sacrifice, he deserves proper recognition; as a member of the United States Army, he proudly continued an essential tradition of American society: the concept of citizen-soldier; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Neal Mitchell's dedication to excellence in the military and his love of his family, his fellow soldiers, and his country, exemplified in his sacrifice of life itself in defense of all that he held dear, stand as enduring examples of all the characteristics that have ensured the continued freedom of our nation and the preservation of its ideals over the course of our history; and

WHEREAS, Specialist Raymond Neal Mitchell III is survived by his father, Raymond N. Mitchell, Jr.; mother, Carolyn Mitchell; sister, Caroline Mitchell; grandparents, Raymond N. Mitchell, Sr., and Joyce Blair Mitchell; aunts, Angela Freeman, Karen Coker, Serena Lindley, Judy Duncan, and Marilyn Newberry; uncle, Dave Lindley; numerous cousins; and best friend and cousin, Jared Lindley; and

WHEREAS, Specialist Mitchell was preceded in death by his grandparents, Betty Jo Cargile Mitchell and Mr. and Mrs. Washington Parsley; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are proud to join with the United States Army and the citizens of Smyrna, Rutherford County, the State of Tennessee, and the United States of America in honoring a fallen son; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor the memory of Specialist Raymond Neal Mitchell III, a native of Rutherford County, reflecting upon his heroic sacrifice of his life as a member of the United States Army and expressing to his family our sorrow for his loss and our gratitude for his commitment to the cause of freedom.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.